

GRAFFITI

521. Mr A.P. O'GORMAN to the Minister for Community Safety:

Can the minister give the house details of the Carpenter government's -

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, sit down. Have I got another offender on this side or is it someone in the public gallery? Whoever have their phones on, if they could please turn them off we would appreciate it. The member for Joondalup might like to start again.

Mr A.P. O'GORMAN: Can the minister give the house details of the Carpenter government's latest moves to tackle the suburban menace of graffiti vandalism?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

I thank the member for not only his question, but also his commitment to cleaning up graffiti, as I have witnessed him out in overalls helping clean up parts of his suburb. On 5 August the Premier launched, on behalf of the state government, the state graffiti vandalism reduction strategy. This is a program of some \$3.6 million with a whole range of different sub-parts to it. On the weekend, the Premier launched another part of that strategy, which was the central hotline number 1800 44 22 55. It will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and it is one of the things that local government asked for. Local government carries a very heavy burden in cleaning up graffiti, but often there was double-reporting, and some incidents were not reported. Now that we have a centralised location where people can report back to, those reports will be sent back to local government and to government agencies; we will speed up the clean-up and make sure that there are no holes left in the coverage. It also means that the police are now in the position where they can possibly respond more promptly. The police have had great success in recent weeks in charging and having successful prosecutions against graffiti vandals and this, again, will aid them. There is also a \$1 000 reward for people who come forward with evidence that helps to procure such a conviction. Clearly, the public needs to realise that graffiti is a crime. We have increased the penalties in this state to a \$1 000 fine and 12 months' jail for graffiti offences - the toughest in the nation. With the new hotline, we hope that we will be able to not only clean up our suburbs more quickly, but also really make inroads into reducing graffiti, which is a look that we do not want and leads people to feel that their suburbs are not safe. We want people to have pride in their suburbs and their homes, and graffiti really attacks that.